



November 20, 2018

The Honorable Bruce Rauner
Governor of Illinois

Dear Governor,

I greatly appreciate the strong alliance and bond which you have helped build between the State of Illinois and the State of Israel.

The State of Illinois and Israel share a long history of mutual appreciation and understanding, especially considering that we both cherish the ideals on which we were founded: democracy, freedom, and independence.

When we met I explained that I have been entrusted with the responsibility for Israel's collective response to the BDS campaign. In this context I would like to draw your attention to Airbnb's announcement on November 19th that it will remove from its site listings of Israeli-owned business in Judea and Samaria, thus adopting the anti-Semitic practices and narrative of the boycott movement. As I explained in our meeting, this is a movement that is not interested in peace or a better future for the Palestinians, but rather in demonizing and discriminating against Israel, the one true democracy and America's strongest ally in the Middle East

Airbnb's announced policy is especially disturbing when one understands that it is a policy directed only toward Israel. Such a policy has not been applied by the company to any other country or region involved in a national dispute or conflict. This constitutes (one hopes unintentionally) the modern form of an anti-Semitic practice which applies a double standard to Israel in a way that is not expected or demanded of any other country.

Following our meeting and your leadership in denouncing the boycott movement, I ask that you consider speaking out against the company's decision, and taking any other relevant steps, including in relation to commercial dealings between Airbnb, the State of Illinois and its employees.

Sincerely,

MK Gilad Erdan
Minister of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy
Minister of Public Security